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Financing of the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad

Financing arrangements for the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad for the period from 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009

Report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions

1. The Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions has considered the note by the Secretary-General on financing arrangements for the United Nations Mission in the Central African Republic and Chad (MINURCAT) for the period from 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009 (A/63/727). During its consideration of the note, the Committee met with representatives of the Secretary-General, who provided additional information and clarification.

2. By its resolution 1861 (2009), the Security Council extended the mandate of MINURCAT until 15 March 2010; authorized the deployment of a military component of the Mission to follow up the European Union force (EUFOR) in both Chad and the Central African Republic at the end of its mandate; decided that the transfer of authority between EUFOR and the military component of MINURCAT would take place on 15 March 2009; and also decided that MINURCAT should include a maximum of 300 police officers, 25 military liaison officers, 5,200 military personnel and an appropriate number of civilian personnel.

3. In order to provide MINURCAT with the resources needed to support its expansion and, in particular, to facilitate the transfer of authority from EUFOR to the United Nations, the Secretary-General is requesting commitment authority with assessment for the period from 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009 in the amount of $140,731,900, inclusive of the amount of $49,868,400 previously authorized by the Advisory Committee to meet the cost of initial critical logistical and personnel requirements of MINURCAT, and in addition to the amount of $301,124,200 already appropriated for the maintenance of the Mission for the period in question by the General Assembly in its resolution 62/233 B. In paragraph 4 of his note, the Secretary-General indicates that the commitment authority is requested pursuant to section IV, paragraph 2, of General Assembly resolution 49/233.

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4. The Advisory Committee has, in the past, commented extensively on the increasing tendency to resort to commitment authority with assessment, pointing out that routine use of that mechanism represents a departure from good budget practice and discipline (see A/61/567, paras. 6-11). Furthermore, while the Committee understands that the timing of the adoption of Security Council resolution 1861 (2009) rendered the preparation of a full budget difficult, it is concerned about the lack of clear information as to the submission, in the near future, of a fully fledged proposal for revised estimates. The Committee intends to discuss these issues in more detail in its forthcoming general report on the administrative and budgetary aspects of United Nations peacekeeping operations. In the meantime, it once again stresses that commitment authority should be used only as a short-term funding bridge mechanism pending the timely submission of fully detailed and justified budget documentation that would allow the General Assembly to decide on full appropriation for the amounts concerned.

5. The Advisory Committee also reiterates that commitment authority, by its nature, is decided upon on an urgent basis for the start-up of a new mission or the expansion of an existing one (see Financial Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, regulation 4.6) when there is not time for the considered reasoning that goes into preparing a full budget and setting up an organizational structure. The Committee notes that some budgetary details have been provided in the Secretary-General's note, although it is only a request for commitment authority. While the Committee has made a number of observations on the resources requested by the Secretary-General, as well as on other matters, in the paragraphs below, it was not in a position to scrutinize the requirements of the Mission in the absence of a full budget. The Committee's observations should be taken into account in the preparation of the budget submission for MINURCAT for the period from 1 July 2009 to 30 June 2010.

6. In paragraph 5 of his note, the Secretary-General indicates that the estimated additional requirements of $140,731,900 provide for the initial deployment by 30 June 2009 of 4,250 military contingent personnel ($67,871,200); expansion of existing and construction of new facilities and infrastructure to accommodate military personnel, including acquisition of equipment necessary to equip military camps, and rehabilitation and expansion of existing airfields ($60,002,100); and deployment of additional air assets ($12,858,600).

7. In paragraphs 6 and 7 of his note, the Secretary-General also indicates that the adoption of Security Council resolution 1861 (2009) has resulted in the need for immediate augmentation of the Mission's logistical planning, engineering and technical staffing capacity in order to prepare for the deployment of the United Nations military force and to support the significant engineering projects to be implemented in a short span of time. The Advisory Committee notes that the related resource requirements will be accommodated from within the Mission's approved 2008/09 budget and reported to the General Assembly in the context of the performance report for that period.

8. As the Secretary-General indicates in paragraph 8 of his note, the additional requirements of $67,871,200 under military contingents are attributable to the projected phased deployment by 30 June 2009 of 2,810 troops and to the transfer under MINURCAT authority on 15 March 2009 of 1,440 troops (8 infantry units)

deployed to Chad as part of EUFOR ("rehatting"). A 30 per cent delayed deployment factor has been applied to the computation of the estimated requirements for the additional 2,810 military contingent personnel. Upon request, the Advisory Committee was provided with more detailed information relating to the deployment status of both the rehatted troops and the additional military contingent personnel. **The Committee is not convinced that the budgeted delayed deployment factor can be achieved. Therefore, the Committee recommends that updated information on the Mission's planning assumptions be provided to the General Assembly for its consideration of this question.**

9. In paragraph 9 of his note, the Secretary-General describes how the additional requirements of $60,002,100 under facilities and infrastructure would be utilized. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that, on 13 February 2009, following protracted and intensive consultations with representatives of the Government of Chad, the United Nations and the Government of Chad had concluded a memorandum of understanding on the use of former EUFOR sites and infrastructure. Under the terms of the agreement, the United Nations has sole use of all but two of the former EUFOR sites and infrastructure without charge for the duration of the Mission's mandate. The United Nations will also have temporary exclusive use of the airport parking space in N'Djamena and shared use of the western airport parking space in Abéché until 31 October 2009. With specific reference to the resources required for airport facilities, the Advisory Committee was informed that, since MINURCAT would be using larger aircraft than EUFOR, it would be necessary to extend and rehabilitate the existing runways at the Abéché airport in order to accommodate them. The airport would also need to be upgraded in order to meet the safety requirements established by the International Civil Aviation Organization for the specific aircraft in question.

10. **The Advisory Committee regrets the fact that, despite the provisions of paragraph 12 of Security Council resolution 1861 (2009), the United Nations will not have full use of all former EUFOR facilities and infrastructure and that, in consequence, additional resources will be required to construct new camps. The Committee notes that some of the above-mentioned construction and engineering projects appear to be longer-term endeavours. The Committee recalls that the commitment authority mechanism is intended to allow the Secretary-General to enter into commitments and to provide short-term funding for urgent requirements. The Committee trusts that the budget submission for the Mission for 2009/10 will provide a detailed breakdown of projected expenditures under this item and that the performance report for the current period will account adequately for the expenses incurred thus far.**

11. As the Secretary-General indicates in paragraph 10 of his note, the additional requirements of $12,858,600 for air transportation take into account MINURCAT air assets, comprising 6 helicopters and 6 fixed-wing aircraft, and provide for the deployment of 16 additional helicopters (5 commercially contracted medium cargo/passenger helicopters and 11 military-type helicopters contracted with troop-contributing countries), as well as one small and one medium fixed-wing aircraft to provide additional capacity for the movement of personnel and transportation of cargo in an expanded area of operation.

12. Upon enquiry, the Advisory Committee was informed that the configuration of the Mission's air fleet had been reviewed taking into account the projected phased

deployment of troops until 30 June 2009, and that the envisaged deployment of 16 additional helicopters would provide the Mission with capacity commensurate with its new mandate. In particular, by 15 March 2009 the 1,440 rehatted troops would need daily aviation support in seven main locations. Uninterrupted aviation support would also be required in respect of Détachement intégré de sécurité operations in nine locations. The Committee was also informed that, during the rainy season (June to October), aircraft were the only viable mode of transport in eastern Chad. **The Committee encourages the Secretary-General to explore opportunities for savings in the area of air transportation through, inter alia, the sharing of air assets with other United Nations operations in the region.**

13. The actions to be taken by the General Assembly are set out in paragraph 11 of the Secretary-General's note. **Bearing in mind its observations above, in particular those in paragraph 8, the Advisory Committee recommends that the General Assembly authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments for the expansion of the Mission for the period from 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009 in the amount of $140,731,900, inclusive of the amount of $49,868,400 previously authorized by the Committee, and in addition to the amount of $301,124,200 already appropriated for the maintenance of MINURCAT for the period from 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009 under the terms of General Assembly resolution 62/233 B. The Committee also recommends that the Assembly approve assessment of the amount of $140,731,900 for the period from 1 July 2008 to 30 June 2009, in addition to the amount of $301,124,200 already assessed for the maintenance of the Mission for the same period under the terms of the aforementioned resolution. The Advisory Committee stresses, however, that its recommendation in no way prejudices the position that the Committee may take on requests for posts and other resources for MINURCAT.**